

all along. They have worked for years to confirm radical judges, plucked right out of the Federalist Society playbook, with the express goal to “pick away at *Roe v. Wade*.” That is their quote.

The radicals on the hard right have passed wave after wave of draconian restrictions at the State level, making abortion nearly impossible to access. One of those laws is about to be upheld by the Supreme Court of the United States.

These radicals have taken what were once outlandish ideas, like prison time for women and doctors and abortion bans without exception for rape and incest, and brought them to the forefront. Ideas that were radical and out of hand they are now talking about freely. Should *Roe* ultimately be overturned, many of us fear it would be just the start.

Over the weekend, Leader McCONNELL acknowledged where this is ultimately going. Without *Roe*, proposals for a nationwide ban on abortions are now possible if Republicans retake the Senate. That is what Leader McCONNELL said this weekend. That is right—a national ban on abortion. Not very long ago, the idea seemed to belong on the extreme of the extremes. Now the Republican leader himself acknowledges this is on the table—just a glaring indication of how radicalized the Republican Party has become in recent decades as the MAGA wing has all but completed its cancerous takeover.

All the times that Republicans disguised their hostility to *Roe* as a matter of “States’ rights” have been exposed for what they are: hypocrisy, a smokescreen hiding the real objective. It is one of the oldest, most sinister arguments Republicans have used for decades. For MAGA Republicans, this has never been about States’ rights; it has always been about getting rid of abortion altogether.

The hypocrisies run deeper still. It is worth noting that the very same party that spent years opposing healthcare by saying that “the American people want healthcare decisions left up to families and doctors”—that is what they said as they opposed ACA year after year. They said, again, the American people want healthcare decisions left up to their families and doctors when it came to ACA. They are now the very same radicals who are telling Americans: No, it is not up to your family and your doctor; it is your body, our choice—the radical right’s choice, the choice of five men on the Supreme Court who are extreme.

Now, many on the other side can’t even bring themselves to own the horrors they have unleashed. They are trying to convince people they are not extreme, but the truth is that the MAGA wing of the Republican Party is running the show, and their actions prove how extreme they are.

Senate Republicans have spent a full week trying to change the subject to anything but *Roe* because they know

how toxic this issue has become for them. The Republican leader tried to say, in vain, that the real story of the draft decision was not the end of *Roe* but the source of the leaked draft? Tell that to 100 million Americans who will lose their most personal of rights. I am sure they don’t care as much about the leaked draft as about how they can control their own bodies.

The chair of the Republican campaign arm, Senator SCOTT, released laughable talking points saying Republicans, of course, don’t want to imprison doctors, even though his allies, his fellow MAGA Republicans, are pushing for exactly that at the State level. It would all be farcical if it wasn’t so bone-chilling and the consequences were not so serious.

Senate Republicans can try to run from their role in securing *Roe*’s extinction, but sooner or later, the truth wins out. Without the actions they have taken for years, reproductive rights wouldn’t be staring straight into a doomsday scenario.

So, tomorrow, the vote to protect abortion rights will shine like a floodlight on every Member of this Chamber. Republicans who pretended disingenuously as if this moment couldn’t possibly happen will have to answer to the women of America whose rights are about to be turned back by decades.

Tomorrow, there will be no more hiding; there will be no more distracting, no more obfuscating where every Member in this Chamber stands. Senate Republicans will face a choice: Either vote to protect the rights of women to exercise freedom over their own bodies or stand with the Supreme Court as 50 years of women’s rights are reduced to rubble before our very eyes. The vote tomorrow will tell.

#### UKRAINE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, now on Ukraine, later today, the House is set to vote on nearly \$40 billion in emergency aid to help Ukraine as the Ukrainians continue to fight back quite successfully against Russian aggression. This is a large package, but the need is great, and time is of the essence. After the House passes the legislation, it is my intention for the Senate to act on it as soon as we can. The President has called on both Chambers of Congress to act quickly on the Ukrainian aid package, so act quickly we must.

The Ukrainian Ambassador will be visiting us at our caucus lunch this afternoon to discuss the upcoming package, and she will let us know how important it is to quickly approve it. Quickly approving this emergency funding is essential to helping the people of Ukraine in their fight against the vicious Putin. It will mean more funding to provide Javelins, Stingers, Howitzers, Switchblade unmanned aerial munitions, and other critical equipment. And it will mean more food, supplies, and shelter for the millions of

Ukrainian refugees who are in the midst of the largest refugee crisis since the Second World War.

We have a moral obligation to stand with our friends in Ukraine. The fight they are in is a struggle between democracy and authoritarianism itself, and we dare not relent or delay swift action to help our friends in need.

And make no mistake, the Senate will move swiftly to get an emergency funding package passed and sent to the President’s desk.

I yield the floor.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

#### INFLATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, this all-Democratic government has managed a unique kind of economic turnaround. They took an economy that was ready to soar, turned it around, and drove it into the ground. American families are being crushed by 8.5 percent inflation. Democrats’ policies have unleashed the worst inflation in more than 40 years.

Last March, the Senate Democratic leader said:

I do not think the dangers of inflation . . . are very real.

At that time, the most recent inflation figure was 1.7 percent. Inflation has more than quadrupled since Leader SCHUMER said he wasn’t worried.

Now, remember, the same Democrats predicted the Republicans’ 2017 tax reform bill would harm the economy and hurt working people. Instead, what it produced is the best economic moment for American workers in modern history. Falling unemployment, low inflation, and wages grew faster for the bottom 25 percent of earners than for the top.

So Democrats’ worldview has been proven absolutely wrong. But, of course, last year, they put it into action anyway. Democrats dumped \$2 trillion on a recovering economy and paid people a bonus to stay home from work, even after vaccines were available, and the American people are hurting as a result.

American workers’ real average weekly earnings declined 3.6 percent over the last year. Inflation has more than wiped out the average worker’s wage gains. President Biden has handed the average American a big pay cut—a pay cut.

The cost of the essentials that families need have been skyrocketing. Gas prices are now the highest they have ever been in American history—ever. Americans are now paying roughly \$4.40 per gallon. That is up about 2 whole dollars from when President Biden put his hand on the Bible. Grocery prices have shot up 10 percent

over the past year. Housing costs are up more than 6 percent. Clothing is up nearly 7 percent. Each category is the worst it has been since at least the early 1980s.

Remember, if and when the inflation rate begins to gradually slow, that does not mean all of these sky-high prices for goods and services will actually fall back down. In many cases, this painful and preventable inflation will be baked into prices going forward. These Democratic price hikes will likely be American families' new normal at the checkout counter, a permanent—permanent—direct result of their failed policies.

#### NOMINATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, now on a different matter, this week, our colleagues want a second run on some controversial nominees who stalled out last month.

Today, Senate Democrats will try again to confirm Professor Lisa Cook to the Federal Reserve Board. Professor Cook has no proven expertise in monetary economics at all, much less fighting inflation. One of her main supposed qualifications for this position is that she sits on the regional Fed Board in Chicago. The problem is, she was literally appointed to that position a few days before she was nominated for this one.

Professor Cook is a proven partisan who has promoted leftwing conspiracy theories and called for a fellow academic to be fired because that person did not support defunding the police. The American people deserve an independent, nonpartisan inflation fighter for this important post.

Likewise, the Federal Trade Commission is an important Agency that gets wide latitude to oversee our private sector. The American people need its Commissioners to be levelheaded experts who will put aside ideological ax-grinding.

The two current Commissioners who were appointed by a Republican President were so qualified and uncontroversial, the Senate approved each of them on a voice vote. But to serve as their newest colleague, President Biden has picked a radical partisan named Alvaro Bedoya.

Mr. Bedoya is such a poor fit that the first time Leader SCHUMER tried to shut down debate on his nomination, he lacked the votes and had to call it off. But Democrats want this hardcore partisan confirmed very badly, so here we are once again.

Mr. Bedoya has publicly attacked police and law enforcement and demanded that our country not enforce—not enforce—our immigration laws. He has called for States to essentially nullify Federal immigration law, saying:

Maryland police have no business working with ICE [and] I think it's high time that state legislators understand that they can do something about this.

He has volunteered statements that align with “defund the police,” de-

manding that none of the Democrats' trillions in stimulus waste should go to provide for law enforcement.

Mr. Bedoya's social media feeds have read like the rantings of a far-left activist with no aspiration to ever receive Senate confirmation.

He has embraced socialized medicine, critical race theory, and cracking down on citizens' Second Amendment rights. He has launched political attacks on current Senators and called the National Republican Party Convention a—listen to this—“White supremacist rally”—a “White supremacist rally,” the Republican National Convention.

The rabid partisanship is not just an extracurricular activity. We know Mr. Bedoya would apply it specifically to the work of the FTC. He is already on the record calling for the elimination of longstanding bipartisan FTC policy statements. He supports excluding minority party Commissioners from investigations.

This nominee would not be fit to neutrally oversee major economic decisions, no matter what the makeup of the Senate was. But he is an essentially foolish choice—foolish—when the American people handed this administration a 50–50 Senate.

I would urge my colleagues on both sides to stop this awful nomination so the President can reconsider and send us somebody suitable.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Ann Claire Phillips, of Virginia, to be Administrator of the Maritime Administration.

Mr. McCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### UKRAINE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, for more than 70 days now, the Ukrainian people have endured—and more than endured, they fought back. They stood up to their invaders and have achieved amazing things against a superior force—superior, at least, on paper.

Many feared that Russia would crush Ukraine in days. Instead, Ukraine has not only withstood Russian aggression but has inflicted humiliating defeats on Russia. Twelve—twelve—Russian generals have reportedly been killed. Russia lost thousands of its troops, as well as hundreds of tanks and scores of aircraft. One estimate from British intelligence suggests that Russia may have lost more than a quarter of its ground combat strength.

Ukrainians successfully pushed Russia out of the Kyiv suburbs, have retaken territory outside of Kharkiv, and still—still—maintain a defiant hold on the steel plant in Mariupol despite being encircled by Russian troops.

At the same time we recognize Ukraine's successes and the fierce determination that has made them possible, it is also important to remember the devastation this war has inflicted. Thousands of Ukrainian civilians have been killed. Somewhere around 12 million Ukrainians have fled their homes. And the list of Russian atrocities gets longer every day—schools and hospitals intentionally bombed, executions and mass graves, torture, rape, the deliberate targeting of civilians, apparent war crimes.

In a few short weeks, Russia has brought unimaginable devastation. The port city of Mariupol—once home to more than 400,000 people—has been reduced to rubble. The city essentially no longer exists. Across Ukraine, an untold number of homes and buildings have been destroyed. It will take years to rebuild or remove the imprint of Russian aggression from the landscape, and some things cannot be entirely recovered. Just last night, Russia intentionally struck civilian centers in Odessa, bombing a shopping mall and a consumer warehouse without regard for innocent human life.

The Ukrainian people have displayed an incredible gallantry and resolve. They have embraced this fight and the cause of their country's freedom. They have not spent any time waiting around for anyone else to come and save them. In fact, a recent news story highlighted the fact that Ukrainians not only continue to oppose the Russians, they have actually started rebuilding in places even as the war continues to rage.

But it is also important to remember that the Ukrainian people cannot sustain this war without military support from the United States and other free countries. The weapons and military resources we have supplied are playing a crucial role in enabling Ukraine to continue standing up to Russian aggression, and it is essential that we continue that support for as long as the Ukrainian people need it.

At the end of April, the President sent Congress a request for \$33 billion in emergency supplemental funding for critical security and economic assistance to Ukraine. Negotiations are ongoing about how we iron out a few matters. The top-line numbers may